Corporation for National and Community Service

2010 Social Innovation Fund

REDF

Reviewer Comments – Phase 1

Table of Contents

2010 Social Innovation Fund

REDF

Section 1 – Reviewer Comments: Group 1

SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND 2010
PANEL CONSENSUS FORM

Instructions throughout this form are indicated in **red.**

PROGRAM DESIGN (45%)

The **Social Innovation Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) states** that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Program Design.

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Corporation asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in the Act, there are two basic operational models of SIF intermediaries. The first is a SIF that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a "geographically-based SIF." The second model is a SIF that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an "issue-based SIF." The Corporation will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF.

i.   ***Geographically-Based SIF***
      To apply as a geographically-based SIF, the applicant must propose to focus on serving low-income communities within a specific local geographic area, and propose to focus on improving measurable outcomes related to one or more of the following priority issue areas:
      - ***Economic Opportunity*** *– Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;*
      - ***Youth Development and School Support*** *– Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;*
      - ***Healthy Futures*** *– Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.*

      The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to those issue areas that the applicant will seek to improve.

ii.   ***Issue-Based SIF***
      To apply as an issue-based SIF, the application must propose to focus on addressing one of the following priority issue areas within multiple low-income communities:
      - ***Economic Opportunity*** *– Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;*
      - ***Youth Development and School Support*** *– Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;*

- *Healthy Futures – Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.*

The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in the priority issue area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to the priority issue area that the applicant will seek to improve.

B. USE OF EVIDENCE

i. *Applicants must include in their application information describing their track record of using rigorous evidence, data, and evaluation tools to:*
    - *Select and invest in subgrantees;*
    - *Support and monitor the replication and expansion of subgrantees; and*
    - *Achieve measurable outcomes.*

C. COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Not applicable. The applicant's Community Resources should be assessed in the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section. Applicants were instructed **not** to provide information in this section. If applicants include information in this section, it should not be considered in your overall rating for the Program Design section.

D. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

i. **Subgranting**
a. *Applicants must describe the process by which they will competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees, and, if applicable, the process by which they have pre-selected some subgrantees. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of subgrantees that are innovative nonprofit community organizations serving low-income communities and that possess:*
    - *A strong theory of change;*
    - *Strong leadership and financial and management systems, including data management;*
    - *A strong financial position, including funding diversity, the ability to meet the requirements for providing dollar-for-dollar matching funds, and the ability to sustain the initiative after the subgrant period concludes;*
    - *Strong community relationships;*
    - *A commitment to and track record of using data and evaluation for performance and program improvement;*
    - *Evidence of effectiveness, including a demonstrated track record of achieving specific measurable outcomes related to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary;*
    - *Strong potential for replication or expansion;*
    - *A well-defined plan for achieving specific measurable outcomes connected to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary, evaluation of program effectiveness, performance improvement, and replication or expansion; and*
    - *A commitment to use grant funds to replicate, expand, or support their programs.*

Either as part of its review of the applications or in clarification reviews prior to award, the Corporation may request additional information regarding pre-selected subgrantees for compliance and appropriate outcomes.

ii. **Technical Assistance and Support**
a. *Applicants must include in their application information describing how they will provide technical assistance and support (other than financial support) that will increase the ability of subgrantees to achieve their measurable outcomes, including replication or expansion. Replication or expansion may happen in various ways (including, for example, creating new sites or affiliating with another program to replicate an intervention) and in multiple contexts (including, for example, serving more people in a current geography or growing to new geographies).*

Panel Narrative Assessment

The applicant presented an excellent program design. The applicant proposes an approach to develop a "replicable, sustainable, and scalable model that has the potential to address a pressing social challenge—made worse by the recent recession—and positively impact thousands of others in communities throughout America." The applicant provides detailed research and evidence showing that "supportive, transitional employment provides a pathway into the workforce and greater social mobility for economically disadvantaged young people who are disconnected from work and school, and for adults who have experienced incarceration, homelessness, or who have severe mental illness." By providing funding and technical assistance to a portfolio of innovative non-profit organizations that are working on chronic joblessness, the applicant is an extraordinary response to the SIF NOFA. The proposed work using the Social Innovation Fund in order to increase this kind of work in California is impressive. This is exactly why the SIF established. The applicant has presented a detailed, point by point response to the NOFA that is impressive in its scope and enthusiasm to address the issue of economic opportunity for the lowest cohort of the unemployed—a population that desperately needs innovative approaches to address chronic joblessness.

Significant Strengths

- Applicant has both knowledge of current evidence and a very wide and deep approach to building a new body of evidence based on their proposed research design and continual improvement model. *(Program Design B.i.)*
- The applicant has an extremely strong track record of using data and evaluation tools. The applicant established the social return on investment metric for the field of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship and using it for this application will be critical to assess the effectiveness of these efforts. *(Program Design B.i.)*
- The applicant provides data showing great need (high unemployment, underserved) and uses this evidence to target areas of the greatest need in California. *(Program Design A.ii)*
- The applicant demonstrates in the narrative how they are uniquely positioned to provide technical assistance and support to subgrantees. *(Program Design D. ii. a.)*

- The applicant addresses every point under Program Design D.i and ii.a. The applicant has a clear plan and exceptional track record in providing TA and support based on comprehensive evaluation and data collection, and several published research studies documenting program impact. The Trial Portfolio phase seems to lead to selection of only the most qualified and committed subgrantees. The commitment to long term investment was particularly impressive. There was evidence of strong community resources and philanthropic partnerships—connection to Emerald Cities has great potential to transfer lessons learned to a broad national network of community and economic development practitioners. (*Program Design D.i and ii.a.*)

Significant Weaknesses

- The application does not have any significant weaknesses.

Select a Rating for PROGRAM DESIGN (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☒ **Excellent**   ☐ **Strong**   ☐ **Satisfactory**   ☐ **Weak/Non-responsive**

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (35%)

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA states** that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Organizational Capacity.

A. ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

In evaluating your organization's ability to provide program oversight, the Corporation will consider:

i.   *The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:*
- *The ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including:*
  - *Experience with and capacity for evaluation; and*
  - *Experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion.*
- *Well-defined roles for your Board of directors, administrators, and staff;*
- *A well-designed plan and systems for organizational (as opposed to subgrantee) self-assessment and continuous improvement; and*
- *The ability to provide and/or secure effective technical assistance.*

ii.   *Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment, including the extent to which you:*
- *Have a track record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact;*
- *Demonstrate leadership within the organization and strong relationships within the communities served;*
- *Have a track-record of raising substantial resources, and, if you are an existing Federal grantee, having secured the matching resources as required in your prior grant awards; and*
- *The extent to which your community support recurs, increases in scope or amount, and is more diverse, as evidenced by:*
  - *Collaborations that include a diverse spectrum of community stakeholders;*

    o *A broad base of financial support, including local financial and in-kind contributions; and*

    o *Supporters who represent a wide range of community stakeholders.*

B. ABILITY TO PROVIDE FISCAL OVERSIGHT

Entities eligible to apply for SIF grants include:
- *Existing grantmaking institutions, or*
- *Partnerships between an existing grantmaking institution and another grantmaking institution, a State Commission, or the chief executive officer of a unit of general local government*

i.   *Existing grantmaking institutions are organizations in existence at the time of the application where, investing in nonprofit community organizations or programs is an essential (rather than collateral) means of fulfilling their mission and vision. In keeping with this view, grantmaking institutions will generally have the following as part of their core operating functions:*
- *Conducting open or otherwise competitive programs to award grants to or make investments in a diverse portfolio of nonprofit community organizations;*
- *Negotiating specific grant requirements with nonprofit community organizations; and*
- *Overseeing and monitoring the performance of grantees.*

ii.   *In evaluating your organization's ability to provide fiscal oversight, the Corporation will take into account its review of your organization's capacity. The Corporation will further consider:*
- *The extent to which your organization, or proposed partnership, has key personnel with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience to provide fiscal oversight of subgrantees; and*
- *Whether your organization, or proposed partnership, has specific experience in providing fiscal oversight of subgrantees of Federal funds.*

Panel Narrative Assessment

The organizational capacity of the applicant is very impressive. The applicant demonstrates strong ability to provide oversight and technical assistance to the sub-grantees. The staff is strong and consists of thought leaders in the area of social enterprise, measurements (SROI), and chronic joblessness. The applicant is uniquely positioned to support innovative organizations in their efforts to make sustainable social impact using measurement to improve and evaluate the outcomes. This application and narrative provide an excellent approach for maximum leverage of the federal dollars. The applicant is encouraged to cast as wide a net as possible to identify innovative, sustainable and effective approaches developed by potential sub-grantees by utilizing its current network and also establishing ties to a diverse array of community-based organizations in the target geographies.

Significant Strengths

- The applicant demonstrates a particularly strong ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including: experience with and capacity for evaluation; and experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion. (*Organizational Capacity A.i.*)

- The applicant has a strong record of accomplishment including a record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact and innovation. The due diligence process and three to five year technical assistance period is extraordinary for this kind of proposal. (*Organizational Capacity A.ii.*)
- The applicant demonstrates a strong record of collaboration as evidenced by the list eight (8) of organizations they are working with including Association for Corporate Growth, Center for Employment Opportunities, and Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative. (*Organizational Capacity A.ii.*)
- The applicant demonstrates a strong record of fiscal oversight and describes the key personnel necessary for oversight of the proposed activities. (*Organizational Capacity B.i and B.ii.*)
- The applicant has extensive experience in grant making and describes strong infrastructure and key personnel to provide fiscal and program oversight. (*Organizational Capacity A and B*)

Significant Weaknesses

- The application does not have any significant weaknesses.

Select a Rating for ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☒ **Excellent**   ☐ **Strong**   ☐ **Satisfactory**   ☐**Weak/Non-responsive**

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (20%)

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA states** that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

A. BUDGET AND PROGRAM DESIGN

In evaluating the cost effectiveness and budget adequacy of your proposed program, the Corporation will consider:

i.   *Whether your program is cost-effective based on:*
   - *The extent to which your program demonstrates diverse, non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;*
   - *The extent to which you are proposing to provide more than the minimum required share of the costs of your program; and*
   - *Whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because you are proposing to serve areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved.*

ii.   *Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.*

B. MATCH SOURCES

i.   *At the time of submission of the application, applicants must demonstrate either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent their first year matching funds, based on the amount of Federal grant funds applied for.*

ii.   *In addition to the match eligibility criteria, the Corporation will evaluate the extent to which you have a combination of cash-on-hand or commitments to meet the full match requirements, and whether your organization will be able to provide financial resources for your SIF program beyond the minimum required match.*

Panel Narrative Assessment

The applicant's description of the cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy is impressive. The program budget of $5,804,949 is more than adequate for the program as proposed. The approach was reasonable and based upon a review of the applicant's past activities it is well within the ability of the organization to conduct themselves well above the standards detailed in the NOFA.

Significant Strengths

- The application demonstrates diverse, non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability. In particular the use of matched funds for most administrative costs is admirable. (Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A.i.)
- The applicant's proposed cost structure and use of the CNCS funds is adequate to support the program design. In particular, the ability to put $3,000,000 out as subgrants has potential to seed many sustainable social enterprises. (Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A.ii.)
- The applicant has commitments well beyond the required match. (Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A.ii.)
- The applicant has developed a budget that adequately supports its program design which is devoting a large portion to technical assistance and research. Technical assistance is an important aspect of the Social Innovation Fund and the applicant's approach to assisting the social enterprise is exactly what is required for maximum social impact and sustainability. (Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A.i.ii.)

Significant Weaknesses

The application does not have any significant weaknesses.

Select a Rating for COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (<u>double-click in the applicable box and select "checked"</u>)

☒ Excellent	☐ Strong	☐ Satisfactory	☐ Weak/Non-responsive

OVERALL APPRAISAL

This application is exceptional in content and detail. It is clear that an investment from the Social Innovation Fund towards the proposed work is an investment in innovation for one of the most challenging social and economic issues of the day—chronic joblessness. This applicant has been on the cutting edge of demonstrating how public costs are reduced by investing in entrepreneurship opportunities for those hardest to employ. The social enterprise also earns income that offsets what would otherwise be ongoing public costs. Despite this evidence, there has been limited government funding available from public or private sources to subsidize employment, a competitive disincentive for the marketplace to employ them, and the lack of a widely replicable model and sufficient capacity among nonprofits to effectively assist them. This applicant proposes a strategy to "build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to operate businesses—social enterprises—that create wage-paying jobs expressly for this target population accompanied by the supports that help them remain employed and improve their economic opportunities." Only a few of the many strengths are highlighted; however, every aspect of this program design is excellent, commendable, and achievable given this applicant's track record of programmatic success, approach to due diligence and technical assistance, in-depth research and contribution to the field.

I. **Select one Band for this application** (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")
Ensure that your selection is supported by your panel's Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, Ratings, and Overall Appraisal Statement. Take into consideration the weighting of each category.

☒ **Band I (Excellent):** A comprehensive and thorough application of excellent merit with very significant strengths and no/minimal significant weaknesses.

☐ **Band II (Strong):** An application that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support, where the value of the significant strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses.

☐ **Band III (Satisfactory):** An application with potential, where strengths and weaknesses are approximately equal. However, some fundamental weaknesses have been identified.

☐ **Band IV (Weak/Non-Responsive):** An application with very significant weaknesses and no/minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include an application that is non-responsive to the published criteria.

Rank

As a panel, Rank this application in relation to the other applications on your panel. Complete this section only after all applications before your panel have been reviewed and consensus has been achieved on each one. The highest rank is "1".

Rank: __2__ of __7__ total applications on Panel # __2__ .

CONSENSUS RUBRIC

Please use this Consensus Rubric as guidance when selecting your Ratings or Bands.

BAND I (Excellent) — *A BAND I rating reflects that the application is compelling, consistently excellent in quality, and addresses all requirements; thereby showing the highest potential for success.*

The **Excellent** application consistently:
✓ Goes beyond what was requested, showing that the applicant has anticipated issues that may arise.

✓ Provides a thorough, detailed response to all of the information requested.

✓ Provides a clear and highly compelling description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Provides clear evidence to support all objectives of this section (no assumptions are made).

✓ Supports ideas and objectives with comprehensive plans explaining and connecting ideas to objectives.

BAND II (Strong) — *A BAND II rating reflects that the application is solid, good-quality, and has great potential for success.*

The **Strong** application:
✓ Provides a response to all of the information requested.

✓ Provides a realistic description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Explains most assumptions and reasons.

✓ Supports ideas with comprehensive plans, examples, or outlines.

BAND III (Satisfactory) — *A BAND III rating reflects that the application generally meets requirements for a reasonable chance of success, but is neither especially strong nor especially weak.*

The **Satisfactory** application:
✓ Covers most of the information requested, with a few exceptions.

✓ Is sometimes unclear how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Makes some assumptions and leaves some reasons unexplained.

✓ Supports individual ideas with plans, examples, or outline.

BAND IV (Weak/Non-responsive) — *A weak/non-responsive rating reflects that the application is below standard especially in ability, skill, or quality; indicating that this application will most likely not succeed as described or is not responsive to the application requirements.*

The **Weak/Non-responsive** application:
✓ Does not provide one or more key pieces of requested information.

✓ Gives an unclear description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Gives many unsupported assumptions and reasons with little or no connection to objectives.

✓ Tends to "parrot" back the question, rather than answer and explain it

✓ Makes many assumptions and many reasons are not defined.

✓ Did not connect the activities to the anticipated results.

✓ Does not address or respond to the requirements/conditions of the NOFA.

✓ Proposes activities that are not consistent with the NOFA and application instructions.

2010 Social Innovation Fund

REDF

Section 2 – Reviewer Comments: Group 2

SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND 2010

PANEL CONSENSUS FORM

Instructions throughout this form are indicated in **red.**

Before you begin, please fill out the Applicant Name and Application ID# in the above header. This Panel Consensus Form (PCF) is where each panel records its consensus assessment of an application. The completion of this form may be led by any panelist; that individual will be designated the Lead Reviewer (LR). All Expert Reviewers are expected to serve as the LR on at least one application. The consensus assessment should be based on the panel's examination of the full application Narrative, which consists of the following 3 categories:

Category	Percentage	Subcategories
Program Design	45%	A. Goals and Objectives
		B. Use of Evidence
		C. Community Resources

		D. Description of Activities
		  i. Subgranting
		  ii. Technical Assistance and Support

Organizational Capacity	35%	A. Ability to Provide Program Oversight
		B. Ability to Provide Fiscal Oversight
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	20%	A. Budget and Program Design
		B. Match Sources

Panels will utilize Panel Consensus Calls to discuss each application and come to agreement on the content of the Narrative Assessment for each category, the Rating for each category, the Overall Appraisal Statement and the Band in which the application will be placed. When completing this form, the LR should rely on four primary documents: 1) the application being reviewed; 2) the IRW Compilation for the application being reviewed (compiled prior to discussion by the panel Facilitator); 3) the SIF Notice of Federal Funds Availability (NOFA); 4) the Consensus Rubric at the end of this form.

Please complete the following steps:

1. For each of the 3 categories (Program Design; Organizational Capacity; Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy), the LR should:
    a. **Write a 3 – 5 sentence Narrative Assessment** reflecting the panel's assessment of the quality of the response in the category being assessed; it is important that this narrative is not a summary of the application, rather the panel's evaluation of the application's quality.
    b. **List the application's significant strengths and weaknesses and annotate each.** Each significant strength or weakness **must** be supported by **at least one** of the Eligibility or Application Review Criteria that were in the SIF NOFA. (examples are included in this form)
    c. **Taking into consideration** both the Narrative Assessment and the listed strengths and weaknesses, **select a Rating** by checking the appropriate box.

2. **Complete the Overall Appraisal section.** In this section, you will:
    a. Provide an Overall Appraisal Statement; and
    b. Select a consensus Band that represents the quality of the application as a whole. The Bands are described in the Overall Appraisal section at the end of this form, and Appendix D of the Review Guide.

3. **After the panel has discussed all applications, provide a Rank for each application.**

PROGRAM DESIGN (45%)

The **Social Innovation Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) states** that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Program Design.

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Corporation asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in the Act, there are two basic operational models of SIF intermediaries. The first is a SIF that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a "geographically-based SIF." The second model is a SIF that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an "issue-based SIF." The Corporation will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF.

i. *Geographically-Based SIF*
   To apply as a geographically-based SIF, the applicant must propose to focus on serving low-income communities within a specific local geographic area, and propose to focus on improving measurable outcomes related to one or more of the following priority issue areas:
   - ***Economic Opportunity*** *– Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;*
   - ***Youth Development and School Support*** *– Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;*
   - ***Healthy Futures*** *– Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.*

   The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to those issue areas that the applicant will seek to improve.

ii. *Issue-Based SIF*
   To apply as an issue-based SIF, the application must propose to focus on addressing one of the following priority issue areas within multiple low-income communities:
   - ***Economic Opportunity*** *– Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;*
   - ***Youth Development and School Support*** *– Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;*
   - ***Healthy Futures*** *– Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.*

   The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in the priority issue area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to the priority issue area that the applicant will seek to improve.

B. USE OF EVIDENCE

i.   *Applicants must include in their application information describing their track record of using rigorous evidence, data, and evaluation tools to:*
   * *Select and invest in subgrantees;*
   * *Support and monitor the replication and expansion of subgrantees; and*
   * *Achieve measurable outcomes.*

C. COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Not applicable. The applicant's Community Resources should be assessed in the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section. Applicants were instructed **not** to provide information in this section. If applicants include information in this section, it should not be considered in your overall rating for the Program Design section.

D. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

i.   **Subgranting**
a.   *Applicants must describe the process by which they will competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees, and, if applicable, the process by which they have pre-selected some subgrantees. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of subgrantees that are innovative nonprofit community organizations serving low-income communities and that possess:*
   * *A strong theory of change;*
   * *Strong leadership and financial and management systems, including data management;*
   * *A strong financial position, including funding diversity, the ability to meet the requirements for providing dollar-for-dollar matching funds, and the ability to sustain the initiative after the subgrant period concludes;*
   * *Strong community relationships;*
   * *A commitment to and track record of using data and evaluation for performance and program improvement;*
   * *Evidence of effectiveness, including a demonstrated track record of achieving specific measurable outcomes related to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary;*
   * *Strong potential for replication or expansion;*
   * *A well-defined plan for achieving specific measurable outcomes connected to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary, evaluation of program effectiveness, performance improvement, and replication or expansion; and*
   * *A commitment to use grant funds to replicate, expand, or support their programs.*

   Either as part of its review of the applications or in clarification reviews prior to award, the Corporation may request additional information regarding pre-selected subgrantees for compliance and appropriate outcomes.

ii.   **Technical Assistance and Support**
a.   *Applicants must include in their application information describing how they will provide technical assistance and support (other than financial support) that will increase the ability of subgrantees to achieve their measurable outcomes, including replication or expansion. Replication or expansion may happen in various ways (including, for example, creating new sites*

or affiliating with another program to replicate an intervention) and in multiple contexts (including, for example, serving more people in a current geography or growing to new geographies).

Provide a panel assessment of the application's PROGRAM DESIGN as follows:

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
- **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
- **Select a Rating for this section.**

Panel Narrative Assessment

REDF offers an overall strong proposal with program design elements that address a compelling theory of change to address issues related to creating economic opportunities for disadvantaged people located in philanthropically underserved locales. The applicant demonstrates strong community connections and a network of partners built over years of experiences. REDF seems to make assumptions that social enterprise is innovative in and of itself and that infusing social enterprise models into targeted communities somehow addresses the matter of innovation. The review panel questioned the extent to which the applicant can choose the right local partners with strengths of innovation. While promulgating social enterprise may be innovative, how REDF will choose innovative subgrantees remains an unanswered question.

Significant Strengths

REDF articulates well its support of organizations that create economic opportunities for disadvantaged people, one of the three issues of priority to the SIF. For example, they suggest ways in which selected nonprofit organizations can implement social enterprises to create wage-paying jobs for the target population. *(Program Design A. ii.).*

REDF has experience using evidence to evaluate the success of its grantees. For example, they calculate a social return on investment (SORI) to determine the outcomes and impact of their grantees. *(Program Design D. i. a.).*

Criteria for sub-grantee selection seems well designed and based upon 13 years of history in grant making evidenced by a 6-point screening schema that includes subgrantees demonstrating a strong theory of change, a commitment to using evidence to inform the program, a commitment to serving low-income people with multiple barriers to employment, demonstrated social enterprise capacity, organizational and fiscal stability and organization capacity with respect to budget size, revenue, staffing, etc. These are deemed appropriate criteria for subgrantee selection to realize the goals of SIF. *(Program Design B. i.).*

Applicant notes strong community partnerships within targeted geographic areas that have been a part of their network for some years prior to applying to SIF. *(Program Design D. i. a.).*

Applicant's venture philanthropy model resulting in evidence-based impact on the social condition in question seems to suggest appropriate experience and expertise for SIF. *(Program Design D. i. a.).*

Applicant has particular strengths in program evaluation in having pioneered a Social Return on Investment metric and using a 10 year pre and post survey to measure long term impact. *(Program Design I B. i.).*

Significant Weaknesses

REDF discusses its own theory of change somewhat, i.e. that social enterprises can serve disadvantaged people, but it does not discuss innovation as relates to its grantees. The impression is that it will invest in promising social enterprises, but it does not discuss innovation as an element nor amplify what type of social enterprises will be funded. *(Program Design D. i. a.).*

The described selection process (vs. criteria for selection) for subgrantees seems vague as evidenced by little explanation of just how SIF subgrantees will be recruited. For example, applicant notes they will disseminate their web-based RFP widely in California, but provides no further details. *(Program Design B. i.).*

Weakness in description of population to be served. Only youth targets are mentioned although the needs of former inmates and homeless are also mentioned in the description of need. *(Program Design B. i.).*

Beyond making a reference to convening subgrantees through learning circle meetings and other convenings, the applicant does not provide details on just how technical assistance will be provided to subgrantees. *(Program Design B. ii. a.).*

Select a Rating for PROGRAM DESIGN (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☐ **Excellent**   ☐ **Strong**   ☒ **Satisfactory**   ☐ **Weak/Non-responsive**

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (35%)

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA states** that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Organizational Capacity.

A. ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

In evaluating your organization's ability to provide program oversight, the Corporation will consider:

i.   *The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:*
- *The ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including:*
  - o   *Experience with and capacity for evaluation; and*
  - o   *Experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion.*
- *Well-defined roles for your Board of directors, administrators, and staff;*
- *A well-designed plan and systems for organizational (as opposed to subgrantee) self-*

assessment and continuous improvement; and
- *The ability to provide and/or secure effective technical assistance.*

ii. *Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment, including the extent to which you:*
- *Have a track record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact;*
- *Demonstrate leadership within the organization and strong relationships within the communities served;*
- *Have a track-record of raising substantial resources, and, if you are an existing Federal grantee, having secured the matching resources as required in your prior grant awards; and*
- *The extent to which your community support recurs, increases in scope or amount, and is more diverse, as evidenced by:*
  - *Collaborations that include a diverse spectrum of community stakeholders;*
  - *A broad base of financial support, including local financial and in-kind contributions; and*
  - *Supporters who represent a wide range of community stakeholders.*

B. ABILITY TO PROVIDE FISCAL OVERSIGHT

Entities eligible to apply for SIF grants include:
- *Existing grantmaking institutions, or*
- *Partnerships between an existing grantmaking institution and another grantmaking institution, a State Commission, or the chief executive officer of a unit of general local government*

i. *Existing grantmaking institutions are organizations in existence at the time of the application where, investing in nonprofit community organizations or programs is an essential (rather than collateral) means of fulfilling their mission and vision. In keeping with this view, grantmaking institutions will generally have the following as part of their core operating functions:*
- *Conducting open or otherwise competitive programs to award grants to or make investments in a diverse portfolio of nonprofit community organizations;*
- *Negotiating specific grant requirements with nonprofit community organizations; and*
- *Overseeing and monitoring the performance of grantees.*

ii. *In evaluating your organization's ability to provide fiscal oversight, the Corporation will take into account its review of your organization's capacity. The Corporation will further consider:*
- *The extent to which your organization, or proposed partnership, has key personnel with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience to provide fiscal oversight of subgrantees; and*
- *Whether your organization, or proposed partnership, has specific experience in providing fiscal oversight of subgrantees of Federal funds.*

Provide a panel assessment of the application's ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY as follows:

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
- **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**

- **Select a Rating for this section.**

Panel Narrative Assessment

REDF brings significant experience in grant making, evidenced by their years of serving in an intermediary role. They provide evidence of a quality staff and a broad set of capacity building services that could assist subgrantees in substantive ways to achieve success. The review panel was seeking more specificity from REDF on how they will choose grantees with a focus on innovative and effective enterprises. The extraordinarily large philanthropic investment by the organization's board chair of $7.5 million into the project is noteworthy. While generally viewed as a strength, the review panel questioned the extent to which there is potential for an imbalance between the role of governance and that of donor/investor in the enterprise.

Significant Strengths

REDF has been managing a portfolio similar for 13 years similar to the one it is proposing here; so it has the experience to do what it is proposing. The applicant demonstrates years of experience in grant making with appropriate monitoring of performance and impact measurement. For example, REDF is the only intermediary in the country that provides grants and technical assistance exclusively to nonprofit social enterprises in the U.S. that employ low-income people with multiple barriers to employment and that measures their model against evidence based objectives. *(Organizational Capacity B. i.)*.

The applicant notes staff expertise in areas essential to success of the proposed project with regards to fiscal oversight. For example, several of the senior staff are holders of finance and MBA degrees and the Director of Operations and Communications is supported by a CPA-licensed financial consultant as approved by the REDF board. This provides a level of confidence about having the appropriate oversight of SIF resources. *(Organizational Capacity B. ii)*.

The use of "double bottom line" reporting on financial and social costs is innovative. *(Organizational Capacity A. i.)*.

An innovative set of capacity building services combines operational and business support, placement of Fellows, evaluation, development of best practice tools, and dissemination, to maximize program wide impact. *(Organizational Capacity A. i.)*.

Significant Weaknesses

Applicant does not clearly identify roles and responsibilities of board leadership in place to oversee organization. Although references are made to 3 different board members who appear to have stature and expertise, there is not a clear understanding of who serves on the board and the extent to which they fulfill appropriate board responsibilities. *(Organizational Capacity A. i.)*.

Select a Rating for ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☐ **Excellent**   ☒ **Strong**   ☐ **Satisfactory**   ☐Weak/Non-responsive

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (20%)

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA states** that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

A. BUDGET AND PROGRAM DESIGN

In evaluating the cost effectiveness and budget adequacy of your proposed program, the Corporation will consider:

i.   *Whether your program is cost-effective based on:*
  - *The extent to which your program demonstrates diverse, non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;*
  - *The extent to which you are proposing to provide more than the minimum required share of the costs of your program; and*
  - *Whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because you are proposing to serve areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved.*

ii.   *Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.*

B. MATCH SOURCES

i.   *At the time of submission of the application, applicants must demonstrate either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent their first year matching funds, based on the amount of Federal grant funds applied for.*

ii.   *In addition to the match eligibility criteria, the Corporation will evaluate the extent to which you have a combination of cash-on-hand or commitments to meet the full match requirements, and whether your organization will be able to provide financial resources for your SIF program beyond the minimum required match.*

Provide a panel assessment of the application's COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY as follows:

  - **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
  - **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
  - **Select a Rating for this section.**

Panel Narrative Assessment

Applicant's demonstration of cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy appears aligned with the goals of the SIF to achieve desired outcomes. The review panel noted that of a total of $5.8 million proposed for the project, a total of $3 million is proposed to be distributed as subgrants, resulting in approximately

half of the funds being spent on various program expenses. It is not clear the extent to which this may be an appropriate percentage of subgranting vs. program expense within the SIF framework.

Significant Strengths

The applicant has a strong track record of obtaining diverse non-federal resources for program implementation and sustainability evidenced by the fact that REDF has attracted almost $19 million in private funding with 70% of the total provided by individual donors. *(Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy B. i.)*.

The applicant demonstrates abilities to meet match requirements by articulating specific dollar commitments from key community philanthropic partners and noted they have raised more than required match and also has firm financial commitments in hand. *(Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy B. i. ii.)*.

Significant Weaknesses

The percent of subgranting dollars vs. those spent on program expenses need further explanation to substantiate reasonableness as related to, for example, higher proposed administrative costs associated with underserved philanthropic communities. *(Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A. i.)*.

Select a Rating for COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☐ **Excellent**   ☒ **Strong**   ☐ **Satisfactory**   ☐**Weak/Non-responsive**

OVERALL APPRAISAL

I. Provide a 3 - 5 sentence Overall Appraisal Statement of the application taking into consideration:

- The Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, and Ratings from each category; and
- The weighting of each category (Program Design (45%), Organizational Capacity (35%), Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (20%)).

REDF offers a strong proposal with the sort of program design, organization capacities and budget design that provides confidence that they can achieve what they seek to achieve if receiving SIF funds. The theory of change that supports the proposal is appropriate. The strong partnerships suggest that there is credibility "on the ground" given the number of years that REDF has operated. The review panel questioned the extent to which REDF has considered the ways in which they may recruit and solicit partnership opportunities to realize the full goals of the SIF funding. How subgrantees will be identified is critical to the project and this element of the design does not seem to be fully developed.

II. Select one Band for this application (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")
Ensure that your selection is supported by your panel's Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, Ratings, and Overall Appraisal Statement. Take into consideration the weighting of each category.

☐ **Band I (Excellent):** A comprehensive and thorough application of excellent merit with very significant strengths and no/minimal significant weaknesses.

☒ **Band II (Strong):** An application that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support, where the value of the significant strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses.

☐ **Band III (Satisfactory):** An application with potential, where strengths and weaknesses are approximately equal. However, some fundamental weaknesses have been identified.

☐ **Band IV (Weak/Non-Responsive):** An application with very significant weaknesses and no/minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include an application that is non-responsive to the published criteria.

Rank

As a panel, Rank this application in relation to the other applications on your panel. Complete this section only after all applications before your panel have been reviewed and consensus has been achieved on each one. The highest rank is "1".

Rank: _ 4____ of _ 7____ total applications on Panel # __13___ .

CONSENSUS RUBRIC

Please use this Consensus Rubric as guidance when selecting your Ratings or Bands.

BAND I (Excellent) — *A BAND I rating reflects that the application is compelling, consistently excellent in quality, and addresses all requirements; thereby showing the highest potential for success.*

The **Excellent** application consistently:
✓ Goes beyond what was requested, showing that the applicant has anticipated issues that may arise.

✓ Provides a thorough, detailed response to all of the information requested.

✓ Provides a clear and highly compelling description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Provides clear evidence to support all objectives of this section (no assumptions are made).

✓ Supports ideas and objectives with comprehensive plans explaining and connecting ideas to objectives.

BAND II (Strong) — *A BAND II rating reflects that the application is solid, good-quality, and has great potential for success.*

The **Strong** application:
✓ Provides a response to all of the information requested.

✓ Provides a realistic description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Explains most assumptions and reasons.

✓ Supports ideas with comprehensive plans, examples, or outlines.

BAND III (Satisfactory) — *A BAND III rating reflects that the application generally meets requirements for a reasonable chance of success, but is neither especially strong nor especially weak.*

The **Satisfactory** application:
✓ Covers most of the information requested, with a few exceptions.

✓ Is sometimes unclear how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Makes some assumptions and leaves some reasons unexplained.

✓ Supports individual ideas with plans, examples, or outline.

BAND IV (Weak/Non-responsive) — *A weak/non-responsive rating reflects that the application is below standard especially in ability, skill, or quality; indicating that this application will most likely not succeed as described or is not responsive to the application requirements.*

The **Weak/Non-responsive** application:
✓ Does not provide one or more key pieces of requested information.

✓ Gives an unclear description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

✓ Gives many unsupported assumptions and reasons with little or no connection to objectives.

✓ Tends to "parrot" back the question, rather than answer and explain it

✓ Makes many assumptions and many reasons are not defined.

✓ Did not connect the activities to the anticipated results.

✓ Does not address or respond to the requirements/conditions of the NOFA.

✓ Proposes activities that are not consistent with the NOFA and application instructions.